



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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OWNER OF HOME HEALTH COMPANY PLEADS GUILTY TO HEALTH CARE FRAUD, MONEY LAUNDERING, DRUG CRIMES

COLUMBUS – Kevin Dennis, age 45, the owner of Columbus-based Community Home Health Care, Inc., pled guilty in United States District Court here today to one count of health care fraud and one count of money laundering. Dennis also pled guilty to one count of manufacturing crack cocaine and one count of possession of a firearm during a drug crime.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio; David Krupnick, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General; Christopher Sadowski, Special Agent in Charge, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; Ohio Attorney General Jim Petro; and Columbus Police Chief James G. Jackson announced the plea entered before U.S. District Judge Edmund A. Sargus, Jr.

In January 2005 the Health Care Task Force of the U.S. Attorney's Office and investigators from HHS/OIG, the Ohio Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, ATF, and the Columbus Police, began investigating allegations that Dennis had committed health care fraud, and that he was engaged in illegal drug trafficking.

The investigation revealed that between June, 2000 and May, 2005, Dennis engaged in a scheme to defraud the government of \$564,630 in health care payments. Dennis solicited a population of the immigrant community to provide unnecessary medical services and billed Medicaid for those services. The fraud was facilitated by having doctors sign Plans of Care indicating that skilled nursing and home health aid services were necessary. In reality, the patients had not been seen by the doctors. The fraudulent scheme is supported by patient records and interviews indicating that there were not enough nurses to see patients and, more importantly, recertify the existing clients that Community Home Health was billing to Medicaid.

In 2004, Medicaid deposited \$13,327,000 into Community Home Health Care, Inc.'s bank account. Dennis and others at his direction made 15 withdrawals totaling \$658,500.

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On April 11, 2005, a state search warrant was served at Dennis's home, 2525 Sunbury Road. Officers found Dennis in possession of a loaded Browning Hi Power 9mm semi-automatic pistol. Also located in between the box springs and side rail of the bed where Dennis slept was a loaded Smith and Wesson Model 19, .357 revolver. Dennis was escorted out of the residence where he waived his rights and agreed to speak with officers. Dennis told a Columbus Police detective that there was a "fist size" ball of crack cocaine inside the house. Dennis also told detectives that he would buy approximately five ounces of powder cocaine and "rock" it up himself every couple of months. In the basement bathroom cabinet, officers found two large glass containers and a white mixing bowl containing cocaine residue where the powder cocaine was manufactured to cocaine base. Over 100 grams of cocaine base were recovered from the residence, with 87.8 grams recovered from inside a gun safe in the basement of the residence.

The health care fraud and money laundering charges each carry a penalty of up to ten years imprisonment and a fine of up to \$250,000. Possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine carries a punishment of from five to 40 years imprisonment, and a fine of up to \$2 million. Possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug crime carries a punishment of five years imprisonment consecutive to any other time served. Judge Sargus will set a date for sentencing.

A federal grand jury indicted Dennis on December 1, 2005. He has been in federal custody since then.

Dennis also agreed to forfeit the firearms, a 2005 pickup truck, more than \$8,000 in cash, and a quantity of jewelry he purchased with the laundered money.

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